

Pavel - Political Science

Abstract: This study seeks to develop the theoretical framework and empirical knowledge of one democratic process called Participatory Budgeting (PB). Representative democracy is often contested, and democratic practices are becoming more diverse. Therefore, I raise two questions: how does the presence of PB relate to voter turnout in local elections? And how does PB impact the re-election rates of local election officials? To answer these questions, I will employ a mixed-methods approach. First, I will collect information for a novel dataset on PB in Europe, the United States and Canada and use a difference-in-difference model to answer each of my questions. Secondly, I will rely on a comparative case study approach to study the motivation behind the adoption process of PB; this will help me better understand why elected officials adopt this process and whether it has any electoral implications. To do this I will conduct elite interviews. Ultimately, PB has the potential to create more civically engaged communities, but we are yet to see how this manifests cross-nationally.

Undergraduate work: During the mentorship program, the research assistant will work with me on data collection on PB in Europe. I will be collecting information on PB in cities with population over 500,000 to identify whether any of the districts within the city have or have had active PB processes in the past 20 years. Some of the variables we will be looking for are as follows: year/s active, within-PB participation rate, population size, PB status by year, voter turnout, elected official/s who implemented PB, political party of elected official, election year, and election result. For the electoral data, we will create a EU-level database by compiling information from each country's national electoral database. In terms of timeline, we will spend 3-4 weeks on collecting the PB data and the remaining time on collecting electoral data.